



What You Need to Know: How Health Care Reform Benefits Seniors

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has many benefits for seniors. Because of the ACA, seniors have already begun to receive more care for less cost, and lower out-of-pocket costs on necessities like prescription drugs.

Under the ACA, key preventive services such as mammograms, colonoscopies, and flu shots are covered for free by Medicare. These services could have had a co-pay as high as \$160 prior to the enactment of the ACA. Last year alone, more than 34 million seniors benefited from one or more preventative services under health care reform. Furthermore, Medicare now provides a free annual wellness visit to seniors.

Additionally, because of savings and elimination of abuse, waste, and fraud, Medicare and the life of the Medicare Trust Fund have been extended by nearly a decade without cuts to care. Over the last four years, a joint anti-Medicare fraud task force of HHS and the Department of Justice has recovered nearly \$15 billion in fraudulent Medicare payments, doubling the amount recovered over the four years prior.

Furthermore, the ACA closes the Medicare Part D “donut hole” by the year 2020, and has already saved millions of seniors a combined \$7 billion – an average of \$1,061 per senior. It is estimated that seniors in the ‘donut hole’ will save an average of over \$18,000 on their prescription drugs by 2022.

All of these reforms have been accomplished while providing additional savings from slower premium growth and a lower deductible. Premiums for Medicare Part B have gone up an average of less than 2 percent a year over the last five years, and the deductible for Medicare Part B is \$15 less than in 2011. Furthermore, the average premium for Medicare Advantage enrollees this year is 10 percent lower than in 2010.